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SUBJECT: G/TIP FY06 PROGRAMS: MONITORING REPORT (SRI LANKA)

REF: 07 STATE 168845

1A. Poloff held discussions on April 2 with Head of IOM's Counter Trafficking Division Anuradhi Navaratnam and Project Coordinator for the G/TIP-funded program "Counter-Trafficking in Persons in Sri Lanka: Strengthening Prosecution and Victim Protection" Roma Ranasinghe. Navaratnam and Ranasinghe provided information on the status of the project and raised concerns about changing circumstances that might require amendments.

1B. IOM reports the following progress:

--KAP Surveys: The Center for Women's Research in Sri Lanka (CENWOR) has been hired to conduct a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) survey of 50 prosecuting attorneys from the Attorney General's office, 20 officers from the Department of Immigration and Emigration, 10 Foreign Employment Bureau staff members, and 50 police officers. The GSL agreed to participate in the interview process and has identified the participants. The questionnaire was finalized in March. IOM expects the interviews to be completed by mid-May.

--Legal Training: Four training sessions on trafficking-related laws are planned for KAP survey participants in May 2008.

--Legal Reference Publication: The content of a multimedia legal reference publication was approved by IOM Geneva and has been given to a developer for production. IOM expects to review the final draft version by early May. This publication includes information on international and local trafficking laws and will be provided to GSL officials to assist them in handling TIP cases. The publication is scheduled for distribution to the Justice Ministry and other relevant stakeholders in June. A ceremony and press conference will be held to publicize these efforts.

--Case management database: A TIP case management database is being developed by IOM through a USAID-funded grant. Under the G/TIP-funded grant, IOM will train additional users and provide support to database administrators.

--Workshops: IOM conducted a TIP awareness workshop for 34 NGO staff on February 21. A separate awareness program for 10 staff from the NGO Women in Need (WIN), IOM's project implementing partner, was held on March 13. Two capacity building workshops are planned for WIN, including one on counseling for TIP victims. The Sahanaya National Council

for Mental Health has been hired to instruct WIN counselors.

--Victim Assistance: IOM has met with the Salvation Army to discuss victim assistance. The two organizations plan to develop a strategy to provide trafficking victims with medical, vocational, and livelihood assistance. IOM staff visited Puttalam District to discuss victim assistance strategies with a local NGOs.

--Hotline: IOM provided technical assistance to WIN to set up a 24-hour victim assistance hotline. The hotline is receiving 10 to 30 calls per day.

--Counselor Desk: IOM assisted WIN in opening a permanent Counselor Desk at the Sri Lankan Police Headquarters in Colombo. Victims may now meet a WIN counselor directly at the police station, rather than receiving a referral. WIN reports that the desk receives a high volume of clients.

¶C. IOM noted that the ground situation has changed somewhat since the proposal for this project was written. The original proposal included working with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) to establish a Criminal Justice Advisory Board. Since the proposal was written, however, the GSL has decided not to pursue establishment of the CJAB. Instead, the MOJ plans to set up a research center for judges and lawyers. IOM has expressed interest in assisting this organization instead.

¶D. This project is being carried out in a country that is just beginning to acknowledge its trafficking problem and work to address it. As a result, IOM must educate policy makers as it proceeds. Post assesses that IOM has achieved adequate GSL "buy-in," making this project sustainable. Its capacity building and training elements, aimed at the GSL and local NGOs, will have a lasting impact on Sri Lanka's ability to combat trafficking in persons and assist trafficking victims.

¶E. IOM has proven capacity and expertise in the area of counter-trafficking in persons. Its Sri Lankan office has a dedicated counter-TIP division. IOM provided adequate staffing for this project and has effective financial and personnel management systems in place. The recent loss of IOM Sri Lanka's senior project manager, who had extensive experience on trafficking issues, has been difficult. However, TIP Division Head Navaratnam has been able to keep the project on track.

¶F. G/TIP may want to provide assistance to IOM in planning the study tour portions of this project. IOM representatives noted uncertainty about how to identify the most appropriate GSL and NGO participants and how to set up a productive agenda for the tours. Poloff encouraged IOM representatives to reach out to IOM headquarters for guidance.

¶G. The activities under this project directly address key deficiencies identified in the TIP report on Sri Lanka. Prosecutions and victim assistance and protection are two of the main areas for improvement highlighted in the TIP report on Sri Lanka. Gaps in the overall TIP-focused assistance programming for Sri Lanka include funding for public awareness campaigns, media awareness initiatives, and coordination of trafficking policy between countries in the region.

¶H. IOM has made significant progress in executing this program, but may need to apply for a no-cost extension in order to complete the activities. This project is a viable candidate for continued funding.

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